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PRACTICE NOTE

Vulnerable Populations Planning: Jackson and Josephine Counties, Oregon's READY BOOK™ for Personal Preparedness

PRACTICE

The Jackson and Josephine Counties, Oregon, Vulnerable Populations Committee created a book that guides individuals with special needs through each step of personal preparedness. The book allows individuals to record information that would be useful during an emergency or evacuation and provides tools to aid in personal preparedness.

DESCRIPTION

Background

In fall 2008, the Jackson and Josephine Counties, Oregon, Vulnerable Populations Committee reviewed existing preparedness resources and determined that they were not designed for individuals with a limited ability to engage in their own personal preparedness. For example, most personal preparedness guidelines call for individuals to assemble a 72-hour supply of food, water, and other items for use during an incident. However, committee members believed that some vulnerable individuals in Josephine and Jackson Counties would be unable to assemble these items without assistance. In response, one committee member proposed the creation of a booklet that would guide vulnerable populations through each step of achieving personal preparedness. The Jackson and Josephine Counties Vulnerable Populations Committee formed a subcommittee to create this tool.

READY BOOK™ Development

The subcommittee created a draft version of the READY BOOK for use in a tabletop discussion among committee members to determine what elements should be added or changed. Each committee member provided suggestions about readability and usability from the perspective of the population that he or she represented. Committee members considered what would be practical in various types of disasters and what might be useful for preparing individuals for shelters. After deciding on a final version, the committee placed an order for the books with a commercial printer and began distributing the book in June 2009.

A preview of the READY BOOK is available online at <http://www.myreadybook.com>.

READY BOOK Features

The READY BOOK is a waterproof book that guides individuals in taking personal preparedness measures. The book is divided into eight tabs with space for individuals to record information such as emergency contacts, medications they are currently taking, and a list of items they will need to bring with them during an evacuation. The READY BOOK also contains waterproof wrist bands that provide space for individuals to record identification information. The wrist bands include a bar code that matches a bar code in the

person's READY BOOK. During an evacuation, an individual can wear one wristband and attach the others to their belongings so that the individual can be matched to his or her READY BOOK and belongings. In addition, the book includes the following:

- A plastic pouch for including pictures of the individual and the individual's service animal or pet, or for including copies of important documents, such as prescriptions;
- Instructions for designing a "go-kit" and a "stay-kit" that includes a list of suggested items for these kits;
- A Red Cross screening form that individuals can complete either before or upon arriving at a shelter; and
- A sign that is red on one side and green on the other that can be hung outside a home to signal to responders whether an individual needs assistance.

READY BOOK page for recording medication information

Dissemination

Several state and local organizations, including public health departments, emergency management departments, area agencies on aging and disability, and developmental disabilities departments have used grants or training funds to purchase READY BOOKs. These organizations distribute them either directly to their clients or to other agencies that can then pass them on to their own clients. Additionally, the Rogue Valley Council of Governments Seniors and Disability Services program distributes copies to registrants on the Jackson and Josephine Counties Disaster Registry.

The [Rogue Valley Council of Governments \(RVCOG\) Senior and Disability Services \(SDS\)](#) program serves as the local Area Agency on Aging. The RVCOG SDS manages the [Jackson and Josephine Counties Disaster Registry](#), which contains a list of individuals that may need special assistance during an incident.

CITATION

Saldaña, Connie. Senior and Disability Services Planner, Rogue Valley Council of Governments. Interview with *Lessons Learned Information Sharing*, 09 Sep 2010.

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